We Gotta Get Out of This Place: Escape From Papago Park, Phoenix, Arizona

Students will examine one of the roles Arizona played during World War II as well as how geography impacted an historical event.

Author: John Halverson
Grade Level: 8th Grade
Duration: 1 - 2 Class Periods

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<td>1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.</td>
<td>PO 3. Interpret maps, charts, and geographic databases using geographic information.</td>
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<td>6. How culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.</td>
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Overview
Maps skills are essential to our understanding of the world around us. Maps also influence our perception of place. During World War II German prisoners of war (POWs) were housed at Papago Park in Phoenix, Arizona. How did maps influence the escape attempt by these prisoners?

Purpose
In this lesson, students will be able to understand one of the roles that Arizona played during World War II by exploring the German escape from the Papago Park Prisoner of War Camp through an examination of maps from which they will draw conclusions.

Materials
- Group Activity: Directions and Devices—How Do We Escape?
- Arizona’s Landforms and Rivers Map
- Major Arizona Railroads and Roads (circa 1940)
- Physical and Cultural Map Route Analysis Sheet
- Transportation Map Route Analysis Sheet
SESSION ONE
1. Group Activity. Pass out Directions and Devices, How do we escape? As groups have the students brainstorm what means of transportation they might use to escape from a POW camp and what types of things they may want for their escape. Discuss some of the ideas brainstormed.

2. Read the background information to the students as a whole group. Answer any pertinent questions. Tell them they will be looking to escape from Phoenix.

3. Individual or Group Work: Hand out the Arizona Landforms and Rivers Map and explain to the students that they are being held captive in 1940 in Phoenix and they need to plan an escape route to enable them to return to Germany. Each student should have a Physical and Cultural Map Route Analysis Sheet.

4. Allow the students sufficient time to complete the previous worksheet and then hand out Major Arizona Railroads and Roads (circa 1940). Each student should have a Transportation Map Route Analysis Sheet.

SESSION TWO
5. Handout the writing prompt: We Gotta get Out of This Place, Escape from Papago Park. Read the instructions as a group and have the students proceed to use their analysis sheets to determine a route of escape, advantages to their route, what they will take with them and a prediction for success. This may be done in small groups or as individuals. This may be done as a completion project for a second session or as a homework assignment dependent upon the individual classroom.

6. Closure for this activity will be the sharing of The Actual Escape from Papago Park. Show the PowerPoint of the images. Seek student feedback as to their reactions to what really happened. Discuss how maps can form our perception of places.

Assessment
Students can be graded for geography and history concepts by completing the Physical and Cultural Map Route Analysis Sheet and the Transportation Map Route Analysis Sheet with 80% or higher accuracy.

The resulting essay can be graded with the rubric provided. A score of 3 or higher will be considered mastery in each category.

Students can answer the question: How can maps influence your perception of a place using the Papago Escape as an example? Use the 6 Traits Writing Rubric to score in the areas of Ideas and Organization.

Extensions
Have the students do a comparison of their potential escape route to the historical route along the Cross Cut Canal.

Have the students research other POW camps located in the United States. Compare them to POW camps in Europe.

Sources
http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/pams/road.html

Papago Park POW camp site
http://home.arcor.de/kriegsgefangene/usa/camps_usa/papago_park.html